

## Introduction

Agricultural Extension is very important in dissemination of Introduction on innovation or new technologies to the clientele. It is important to improve farmer's method of production and enhance farm output .

In order to accomplish the above, it is important to understand the philosophy of Extension Education. This deals with the foundation upon which extension activities are based. It is the propelling forces that determine why certain actions are taken; it is related to nature of human life and guides behaviour. The basic philosophy is to help farmers to help themselves in the identification and finding solution to the problems on his farm and home.

Agricultural extension work is voluntary and local leaders are also involved. This is to enhance local participation in decision making and sustains the technology that is being utilized. Extension also involves working with the whole family as all the members are critical to effective agricultural production.

Principles of agricultural extension involve the factors that guide the activities of Agricultural Extension and how decisions are taken. The principles propel extension activities and programmes which are planned to motivate the farmers to adopt the introduced technologies. This involves understanding of the scope of agricultural extension itself, so that there could be deep understanding of the roles expected from all those who are involved in extension activities. The use of subject matter specialist and various teaching methods cannot be underscored in extension work. This is to help farmers in solving their production problems and effective understanding of what they are learning .

In this course we discuss the characteristics of extension agents and their roles. The extension agents are the key personnel in extension work. It is therefore important to have a deep understanding of their roles and requirements for such position.

Extension work requires effective communication work. The elements of Agricultural extension communication determine the teaching methods to be used and approaches to extension work. The last is to have effective and extension programme for increased level of farmers production.

### **Definition of Agricultural Extension**

What comes to your mind when the word agricultural extension is mentioned?

When you check up the word “extension” in the dictionary, it is stated as “extended or projected”. Agricultural extension involves exchange knowledge to the end users, however, on the simplest level; **Agricultural extension** could be defined as voluntary out of school educational programme for clientele consisting of the relevant contents, principles and procedures. It also involves dissemination of information on innovation or new technology to the clientele. Agricultural Extension is also regarded as “the body of knowledge which accumulates experience and research findings with respect to extension and borrows insights from other disciplines and field of endeavors which seems pertinent to extension. Extension as a science has wide scope of involvement which is not limited to information exchange alone. It includes everywhere information on new technology or interaction with clientele is mentioned.

### **Nature of Agricultural Extension**

Agricultural Extension has two dimensions

**a- Educational dimension**

**b- Communicational dimension**

**Education dimension** involves the change agent ( extension worker ) attempting to work on the clientele's psychology through the use of effective teaching methods to improve the knowledge and develop the skill of the clientele (former) as he acquires knowledge on improved practices to enhance his production and marketing activities. The nature of education is for action, problem and oriented or centred, hence it is different from the formal education.

**Communication dimension:** This involves dissemination of information to the clientele on new technologies or innovation. It also involves exchange of ideas that could provide basis for research or feedback on the use of previous innovation. The methods of communication could be through the use of individuals, group or mass method. Therefore, extension is involved in dissemination of useful information through the appropriate methods to the clientele.

### **Types of Audience in Agricultural Extension**

It should be noted that agricultural extension serves as intermediary between research/ scientist and the clientele. The clientele is referred to as the end users of information which the extension personnel deal with. In the case of agriculture, it could be the farmers, community leaders of women who are involved in the processing and utilization of agricultural products .

**Clientele in any set up could be :**

1- Heterogeneous or

2- Homogenous

**Heterogeneous audience** is made of those who are young, old, literate and non-literate, large scale farmers, small scale farmers, low economic status, high economic status, etc. In agricultural extension, the audience is mostly heterogeneous.

**Homogenous audience** consists of a set of individuals with common characteristics. They may all be young, or old, literate or non-literate. In general they have a common denominator/factor that binds them.

The type of audience determines the type of extension methods and materials to use in extension work.

### **Importance of Agricultural Extension**

While living in the midst of rapid scientific and technological development, many of the farmers in the rural communities still employ traditional methods of production.

well as make the rural communities part of the dynamic social order where rapid change is characteristic, an extension service among the rural community is needed.

Agricultural extension is also needed to help the clientele obtain information on sources of input and credit facilities that would enhance their level of production. In order to have a cultural compatible, socially acceptable and economically feasible technology, extension services is important to guide research development. This is because; extension will give feed back to the scientist/researcher on the development technology so as to help improve upon the earlier developed technology.

Despite the fact that farmers are encouraged to increase their level of production, the issue of marketing outlet is important. Agricultural extension provides information to the farmers on marketing strategy to use to maximize their profit while it also introduce to the farmers, market opportunities to help dispose off their products as at when due.